GOVT 297  
Politics and Political Development in the People's Republic of China  
Spring 2015  
WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY  
(M & W 1:10 - 2:30 PM, FISK 115)

Professor: Dennis L.C. Weng  
Email: lweng@wesleyan.edu  
Office Hours: M W 10:00-11:30, or by appointment  
Office/Mailbox: PAC 221  
Phone: TBA

Course Objectives:
Despite the collapse of the U.S.S.R. and Eastern European Communist regimes since 1989, the People’s Republic of China (P.R.C.) has retained a one-party regime while it continues its economic reforms begun in 1978, before reforms in other communist counties got under way. In contrast to former communist regimes, the P.R.C. is attempting socialist market reforms while retaining the people's democratic dictatorship under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. We shall examine the politics of this anomaly, study several public policy areas, and evaluate the potential for China's democratization.

This is a course on the domestic politics of China since the revolution of 1949. We will pay special attention to history, political economy, and the effects of great political events on the everyday lives of ordinary Chinese people. In the first part of the course we will concentrate on the evolution of political life in China during the Mao years, 1949-1976, including the revolution, the socialist economic and social transformation, and mass campaigns culminating in the Cultural Revolution. The second part of the course will focus on issues in post-Mao China: economic reform, the return of the market and the breakdown of many socialist institutions, and the social, economic and political challenges posed by these changes. Throughout the course, we will be thinking about how some of the tensions within Chinese society and political economy (city vs. countryside, plan vs. market, center vs. periphery) have affected the course of political change, and how political change has affected men and women, young and old, Han and non-Han, coast and interior, creating a great diversity of political experience in China.

Reading:
We will be reading portions of the following books. As a result, you may need to purchase them. The recommended readings are mere suggestions for future reading. In addition to these texts, students are responsible for all the assigned readings listed on syllabus. All these readings and other course materials will be accessible via Moodle for students to download.

- Tony Saich, GOVERNANCE AND POLITICS OF CHINA, 3rd edition (New York: Palgrave, 2011)  

Keeping Up With News About China

Please stay abreast of the news about China while you are in this class. Try to approach it from several different directions, because you'll get very different stories and angles. For Western, non-US reporting, check out a UK paper, for example, The Guardian, www.guardian.co.uk. The New York Times, http://www.nytimes.com/, and the Christian Science Monitor http://www.csmonitor.com/, are two good American sources of news on China. For the Chinese government's point of view on the news, visit the China Internet Information Center, http://www.china.org.cn/english/index.htm, or the Xinhua News Agency site, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english2010/. You could also see what the English-language Taiwanese papers, Hong Kong papers, and Singaporean papers have to say.

Requirements (Grading):

You are required to attend all lectures and read the materials according to the schedule (see below). All absences require a written explanation in order to be considered to be an excused absence. Attendance is recorded and each unexcused absence will cost you a small fraction of your final grade. You may miss up to Three class sessions without penalty to your grade. I will examine your progress based on:

• Attendance, Weekly Memos, and Participation - 20%
• Mid-Term - 25%
• Final Exams - 25%
• Literature Review - 30% (5% - Presentation, 25% - Literature Review)

Attendance/Class Participation/Memo – 20%
Attendance will be taken regularly. You may miss up to Three class sessions without penalty to your grade. You are responsible for all of the materials discussed in class and all of the assigned readings. Your participation is an important part of what makes the class go well. We should all come to class with a common baseline, upon which our discussion can build. In practical terms, this means everyone should come to class able to explain concisely the argument(s) or main point(s) of the reading for that day. There will also be exercises, presentations, and debates, which also count as participation, of course.

Weekly Memos (Each Missing Memo costs 1% of your final grade)
For each week, each of you is required to submit a short memo of two paragraphs (500 words or 1 page) on required readings. You will be assigned to one of the two memo groups (Group A & B). Members of Group A must submit a weekly memo to me via email by 10 p.m. on Sunday, whereas members of Group B need to submit your weekly memo by 10 p.m. on Tuesday (one day before our class). You will need it for our discussion in class. The first paragraph must restate the main argument of the readings.
In the second paragraph, it must briefly suggest the strengths and the potential weaknesses of these readings. In addition, you need to have at least two discussion questions for our class discussion included in your weekly memos. It may be included either in your second paragraph, or you can list your questions at the end of your memos.

**Important Note:** I often receive more than 100 emails in a given day, and I will need you to help me sort yours out of the mix. In the email’s subject line, please type “GOVT297 Week X Memo: ” followed by your last name so that I can better keep track of your emails. If you do not do this, I may inadvertently fail to give you credit for your email. Do not put anything else in the subject line. That way, if you need to email me regarding something else, I won’t mistake it for an assignment email. I will provide feedback on how you are doing on the memos at a few points in the semester, but a far better way to have them evaluated is to print them, bring them to class, and use them as the basis for our discussions. In addition to enriching our discussions, they are a great way for me to prepare for class – they help me see which points came across well and which did not and need emphasis. Finally, they are also a chance to explore ideas without the pressure of expanding them into full papers, though it is likely that great papers may well get their start as smart memos.

**Exams (multiple-choice, definition, and short essay questions)**
You will have two in-class exams in this semester. Both exams will cover lectures, readings, and current events. The First exam will be on **March 4th** and the final exam will be on **May 6th**. There will be no make-up exams unless you have a documented medical emergency. Each of the two exams counts 25% in your grade. The exam questions (multiple choice, definitions, and essay) will be drawn from the materials presented in the lectures, discussions, and readings. Lectures and readings overlap. Nonetheless, the lectures will often present at least some material from a different perspective than what you find in the required texts. You are responsible to know all the assigned readings AND the lecture material AND the topics discussed in class.

*Note: Makeup will not ordinarily be scheduled for any quiz or examination. If you must miss an exam due to illness, please notify me in advance and be prepared to provide corroborating medical documentation.

**Literature Review – 30%**
A literature review is essentially an overview and examination of the key pieces of scholarly literature that have been published on a particular topic. It is also generally one of the first stages of a larger research project – to survey what has already been written about your topic of interest, ensuring you learn from what others have done and do not end up repeating research that is already well documented. The review needs to focus on a particular question or topic and provide analysis of strengths, holes or weaknesses, biases, and then synthesize the literature to determine where work still needs to be done. In essence it gives you a sense of the “state of the field” and helps you assess a problem (your research interest) by looking at how it has evolved in academic debates over time.

Your literature review must: include a minimum of EIGHT academic sources (not from our syllabus) dated between 2001-2014, be 7-9 double spaced pages (1-inch margins, a normal 12 point font), use the APA citation format, and have a clear/developed thesis related to a research question involving the politics of contemporary China. The review will be graded on both
content and writing (i.e. clarity, organization, argument development, grammar, and spelling). A few points on sources: 1) eight is the minimum required to obtain a passing grade and the sources must be both academic and dated after 2001 to count (less than eight acceptable sources means you will receive an F on the paper); 2) ALL sources used in the paper must be academic sources (books and journal articles) and you may NOT use any newspapers, op-ed pieces, magazine articles, or Internet sources (with the exception of journal articles obtained via the library website); 3) you can include readings from our syllabus as additional sources; 4) you can/should include relevant sources published before 2001 to capture the full depth of the literature, but these will not count towards your eight. Note that I am more than happy to assist you in determining what an academic source is, so you should feel free to ask questions about specific sources.

In choosing a topic for the review you want to find a manageable question or area to examine. After narrowing down your topic, you may still find that the literature is overwhelming with hundreds of “key” works that would be relevant. I do not expect you to exhaust the literature and cover all books and articles ever produced on a topic, but you should try to determine which ones are important for understanding your area of interest. Again, I am willing to assist you in this task should you need help. Prior to beginning your project you must meet with me to discuss/approve your topic (this should take around 5 minutes, depending on how organized you are). I will NOT give approval by email and you should NOT wait until the last minute to schedule a meeting since it may take a while to coordinate our schedules. Remember you need topic approval before you can begin working on the summary, which means meeting with me no later than 1 PM on March 30th. If you do not get approval by that time you will receive a zero for that portion of your grade, but you must still make an appointment to get topic approval before continuing onto the summary assignment.

Once you receive topic approval, you must submit a 2-page typed summary of your topic, outlining the basic issues you plan to examine. With this summary you must also attach a tentative bibliography of the literature you plan to include. The summary and bibliography are due no later than 1 PM on April 8th via email. Late summary will not be graded (you will receive a zero) but they are still required before you may turn in the literature review. The final literature review must be turned in by 1 PM on May 4th. The breakdown for the review is: topic approval (1%), topic summary (4%) and completed review (20%) – a total of 25% of your grade.

**Final Presentation – 5%**
Near the end of the semester, each of you will present your literature review project to the class at large. The class will serve as critics and questioners of the approach and the recommendations of the review. The presentations should be professional, engaging and lively — and will be so graded. Evaluations will also be based on flow of presentation, understanding of the issue, and how you respond to questions. Handouts, overheads, slides and other presentation enhancements are encouraged. These presentations should not exceed 10 min. in duration. Ability to hit the time mark will be included in my evaluation of the presentations.
Grade Scale:

The numerical equivalents of the letter grades are

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\begin{align*}
A+ & = 98.3 & C- & = 71.7 \\
A & = 95.0 & D+ & = 68.3 \\
A- & = 91.7 & D & = 65.0 \\
B+ & = 88.3 & D- & = 61.7 \\
B & = 85.0 & E+ & = 58.3 \\
B- & = 81.7 & E & = 55.0 \\
C+ & = 78.3 & E- & = 51.7 \\
C & = 75.0 & F & = 45.0
\end{align*}
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POLICY ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

I am committed to upholding the College Honor Code, including the Statement on Academic Responsibility. I have zero tolerance for plagiarism and other forms of dishonesty and will report students who engage in such activities to the Dean for Student Affairs. Students who are found to have violated the Honor Code can expect to fail the class.

Examples of plagiarism and dishonesty include (but are by no means limited to): neglecting to enclose direct quotes in quotation marks or use footnotes, verbatim or near-verbatim “paraphrasing”, getting someone else to write your paper under your name (this includes so-called “term paper mills”), using another student’s argument in your paper and attempting to pass it off as your own, switching exams with someone, looking at someone else’s exam or knowingly allowing someone to look at your exam or copy your paper, taking an exam for another student, illicitly obtaining paper topics or test materials before they have been distributed, etc. Know the standards for citation and use them. Carelessness and ignorance are NOT valid excuses for plagiarism! Ask me if you have any questions. For standards of citation, visit http://libguides.wesleyan.edu/citing.

A bad grade lessens in importance over time. Even the best students do poorly on an exam or a paper every now and again. You can recover from a bad grade, but being marked as a cheater will haunt you for the rest of your career. If you are encountering difficulty in the class, do not despair! Come talk with me and I will be more than happy to help you out.

NOTE: In addition to the above, students are expected to:

(a) know that this syllabus, including the calendar, is subject to change at the discretion of the professor;

(b) access and read related policy material at http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/standardsregulations/plagiarism.html
## Course Schedule

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
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<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
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<td>1/26</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
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### I. A sketch of the history

#### 1/28 Introduction to China (Before 1949)  
**Group A**

R. Keith Schoppa, “From Empire to People’s Republic,” in Joseph, Ch.2, pp. 41-53

This week please watch the film “China: A Century of Revolution, 1911-1949, Part 1” You can find the link to the film on Youtube. Take notes, jotting down particularly striking images or arguments in the film; treat the film as a course text, the same as written materials.

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<td>2/02</td>
<td>The Revolution of 1949 and the founding of the PRC</td>
<td><strong>Group B</strong></td>
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<td>R. Keith Schoppa, “From Empire to People’s Republic,” in Joseph, Ch.2, pp. 53-71</td>
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### II. MAO THOUGHT AND THE '50S: LAND REFORM, COLLECTIVIZATION, AND NATIONALIZATION OF THE ECONOMY

#### 2/04 Basic principles of Mao thought  
**Group A**


http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_2.htm  
Read from "The Importance of the Peasant Problem" through "The Question of Going Too Far," and more if you can stand it. What is Mao advocating? How is it different from what other revolutionaries prescribed as the solution for China's problems?

What is his main point? Where does knowledge come from? What are the implications of that for politics? Don't spend a lot of time trying to understand every word; the object is for you to see how Mao Zedong thought reads. If you'd like to read more of Mao's writings, check out the main site where these readings are posted,  
http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selectedworks/
No Class – watch “The End of Poverty” and work on first assignment: Finding research topic

2/11 The revolutionary government in the countryside: from cooperatives to collectives to communes
1. Saich, “China’s Changing Road to Development: Political History”, Ch.3
2. Teiwes, “Mao Zedong in Power,” in Joseph, pp.72-84
This week please watch the film “China: A Century of Revolution, 1949-1976, Part 2” You can find the link to the film on Youtube. Take notes, jotting down particularly striking images or arguments in the film; treat the film as a course text, the same as written materials.

2/16 The Hundred Flowers, the Great Leap Forward and the Four Clean-ups: the politics of mass campaigns and the beginnings of Ultra-Leftism

2/18 Struggles at the top and the events of the Cultural Revolution
Teiwes, in Joseph, pp. 96-117

OVERVIEW OF THE POST-MAO REFORMS
2/23 Cultural Revolution, continued: discussion of "The Mao Years" and the meaning and effects of the Cultural Revolution
Saich, “China Under Reform, 1978-2010,” Ch.4

FORMAL POLITICAL STRUCTURES IN THE PRC
2/25 Formal structures of government: the Communist Party and the State
1. Saich, “The Chinese Communist Party,” Ch.5
2. Saich, “The Central Governing Apparatus,” Ch. 6

3/02 Mid-Term Review
1. Saich, “The Central Governing Apparatus,” Ch. 6

3/04 Mid-Term Exam
3/06-3/22  **Spring Break**

3/23  Formal structures of government: the Communist Party and the State

1. Saich, “Governance Beyond the Centre,” Ch. 7
2. Cheng Li, “China’s Communist Party State,” in Joseph, Ch. 6

3/25  Local structures of social and political control during the Mao years: the danwei (work unit) and the residents' committee


**ANALYZING RURAL CHINA: A HISTORICAL APPROACH**


4/01  View the film “The Story of Qiu Ju.”

**REFORMS IN AGRICULTURE, AND RURAL POLITICS**

4/06  The politics of agricultural reform and the household responsibility system

1. John James Kennedy, “Rural China: Reform and Resistance,” in Joseph, Ch. 9
2. Saich, pp. 271-281.

**POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

4/08  Which institutions have power in villages, who gets elected to office, how do they get elected, and how democratic are the elections? What do we mean by democracy to begin with?

1. Saich, “Political Participation and Protest,” Ch. 8

**REFORMS IN INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE**

4/15  No Class – Academic Meeting

SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE REFORMS

4/20  1. Saich, “Social Policy”, Ch. 11

     pp. 57-79.

China’s Future Challenge

4/27  1. Saich, “China’s Future Challenges”, Ch. 13
     2. Jun Jing, “Environmental Protests in rural China,” in Perry and Selden, Ch. 8

Class Presentations & Conclusion

4/29  Student Presentations

5/4   Student Presentations

5/6   Final Exam

Final Literature Review Due